

## Malcolm Murray Campbell

Malcolm Murray Campbell, Murray to his family and Malcolm to his colleagues and friends, was born in Glasgow on 22 August 1943, the eldest of four children. Both his mother's and father's families came from Isle of Lewis but his father's parents migrated to Canada after the First World War. Malcolm's father grew up in Canada and returned to Scotland at the outbreak of war, becoming a gunner in the Royal Navy.

Malcolm was educated at Bellahouston Academy and took First Class Honours in Chemistry at Glasgow University. As a Salters' Scholar in Glasgow he joined the group of Professor Charles (C J W) Brooks in the developing new field of gas chromatography-mass spectrometry and obtained his PhD in 1968. In the same year he married Brenda Simpson, herself a graduate in classics at Glasgow University, and after the award of his PhD they both went to Madison, Wisconsin, USA where Malcolm undertook postdoctoral work on mechanistic organic chemistry with Professor Jerry (J A) Berson.

In 1969 Malcolm Campbell was appointed to a Lectureship in Organic Chemistry at Heriot-Watt University. It was clear from the outset that he was an outstanding scientist with wide interests and the energy and vision to make things happen. His arrival in Edinburgh coincided with the appointment of the first Professor of Organic Chemistry. Reorganisation of lecture courses and practical classes was undertaken and Malcolm introduced a number of innovations in the teaching of new experimental techniques. A visit to the department of Professor Olly Runquist from Minnesota led to the joint publishing of a programmed learning text *Spectral Analysis of Organic Compounds* in 1972. Malcolm also played an active role in the Open University.

Research funds were short in a small department and Malcolm soon established links with the pharmaceutical industry - Beecham, Organon and Pfizer in particular. His research programme focused on the chemistry of beta-lactam antibiotics such as the penicillins and cephalosporins, together with steroidal amino alcohols. He was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1978. Malcolm spent six months on secondment to Organon Laboratories in Newhouse and in 1979-80 had a further period of leave in Pfizer's research department in Groton, Connecticut, USA. While there he was appointed to the Chair of Organic Chemistry in the University of Bath and at the time was one of the youngest Professors of Chemistry in the UK.

In two periods as Head of the School of Chemistry in Bath (1984-87 and 1990-93) Malcolm Campbell was given the opportunity to modernise and upgrade not only the organic chemistry section but the whole School of Chemistry. The main emphasis was on synthetic organic chemistry, his own interest, and he was able to attract a number of very bright young men who have since made their mark in other larger departments. He saw the potential of both computational chemistry and bioinorganic chemistry and under his influence appointments were made in these areas as well as the establishment of a Chair of inorganic chemistry. Under his dynamic leadership and with the active encouragement of the Vice-Chancellor, the School was able to attain a Grade 4 rating in the Research Assessment Exercise of 1992. He himself carried out research on the synthesis of phosphorus-containing and other peptide mimics, shikimic acid, together with some antibiotics and toxins. He actively encouraged his younger members of staff to be independent and resourceful.

Malcolm took a keen interest in the progress, both academic and sporting, of his students. He became Senior Resident Tutor at Eastwood Halls of Residence on the Bath campus from 1987-95, which meant that both he and his family were in day-to-day contact with undergraduates.

In character Malcolm Campbell was inspirational. In scientific conversation he sparkled with ideas and was therefore much sought after as a consultant in the pharmaceutical industry. He played a major role in organising Conferences in Medicinal Chemistry and was Chairman of the Organising Committee of the 4th Medicinal Chemistry Conference held in Cambridge in 1986. He served on the Council of the Perkin Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry, the Fine Chemicals and Medicinals Group Committee of the RSC Industrial Division and on the Committee of the Biological and Medicinal Chemistry Sector of the RSC. He was a member of the Board of Governors of Bristol Polytechnic. In the University of Bath he served as a Member of the Long Term Planning Committee.

Malcolm Campbell's life was enlivened by his attraction, not to say addiction, to competitive sport. While at school he won medals for sprinting. He boxed at Glasgow University and played chess to a high standard. He was a keen footballer and, for a time, played in an amateur league; he became an accredited referee of the Scottish Football Association. At Heriot-Watt University he was an active member of the Chemistry Department soccer team and of the University Staff Golf Club. In Bath he was a stalwart follower of Bath Rugby Club and acted as a steward at home matches. Both of his sons played rugby and soccer and he was a tireless supporter at school matches. He helped to set up and run a village boys' soccer team. He was a keen amateur archaeologist and later developed an interest in fly fishing.

After his second term as Head of the School of Chemistry Malcolm suffered from ill health for the first time in his life. Although he remained active in the University he was heavily involved in major conferences with a European connection. In 1998 he was Chairman of the Organising Committee for the XVth International Symposium on Medicinal Chemistry, held in Edinburgh under the auspices of the European Federation for Medicinal Chemistry. In the same year he was on the Organising Committee for an International Meeting in Dublin on Drugs from Natural Products. Malcolm took early retirement in 1996 and moved to a croft in Lewis. He died on 29 October 2001.

In his memory, the Biological and Medicinal Chemistry Sector of the Royal Society of Chemistry have instituted the Malcolm Campbell Memorial Prize, which is open to individuals or a team based in academia or industry. It is to be awarded biennially and consists of a substantial monetary prize, together with a medal and certificate.

On 7 December 2001, in the Chaplaincy Centre of the University of Bath, more than one hundred friends of Malcolm Murray Campbell met in a celebration of his life. Contributions and recollections were given by senior members of the University, colleagues, friends and, most movingly, by his daughter Janet.

There emerged a man of many talents, enthusiasms and achievements who will be much missed by all who knew him. A tree was planted in his memory on the campus of the University to which he had given so much. He is survived by his wife Brenda and their children Janet, Calum and Alasdair.

I am much indebted to Mrs Brenda Campbell for her help in the preparation of this memoir.

**J Grant Buchanan**

***Malcolm Murray Campbell BSc, PhD, DSc, CChem, FRSC, FSA(Scot): born 22 August 1933; elected FRSE 5 March 1984; died 29 October 2001.***